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By

William [illegible]

Late Captain, Commissioned Officer,

Author of

"The Lost Archives", [illegible],

"[illegible]."

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William T. Tilghman.

Except for the yearly recurring "Memorial Day" when relatives and surviving comrades journey to decorate the graves and commemorate the deeds of those who lovingly participated in the struggle, or possibly the mention of pensions in the survivors or an occasional obituary of some deceased veteran, our great Civil War, which for four years, from 1861 to 1865, desolated our land, has passed into history and there are today comparatively few among the millions inhabiting our country to whom our War of the Rebellion is more than a shadow.

To those yet surviving who served in the ranks on either side the remembrance of the camp, the march, the battlefield, the hospitals and prisons, recalls many scenes and incidents then occurring, and it is an incident of prison experience I am about to relate.-

My regiment, attached to the Second Brigade, Second Division, Nineteenth Army Corps, had been serving in Louisiana until July 1864, and was then transferred to Pensacola Landing, Va., from whence it was ordered to the Shenandoah Valley, Va., where, as part of Sheridan's command, it was

been doing active service and has participated in the several engagements against the rebel forces under Early, and was in September 1864, with the rest of the army, held in readiness for the forward move orders for which we were in daily expectation of receiving, our position being a short distance to the South of Berryville.

September 19th, orders were received to move at 2 o'clock A.M. the next day. September 20th, at 1 o'clock A.M. a general forward movement of the whole army commenced. We marched up the pike towards Winchester, thirty-two miles South of Harper's Ferry, where the enemy was reported to be in strong force. In the early morning we heard heavy firing in our front. Ambulance wagons and artillery filled the road and caused a long delay until they were hauled out to either side and allowed our passing. Proceeding on we soon passed hospital tents on the road side, where already the Surgeons were busy caring for the wounded who were rapidly being brought in. At 9 o'clock A.M. we very marched under the crest of a hill to the right of the pike, crossing the Opequan where we filled our canteens, and line of battle was formed, the First and Third brigades of our division (Grover's) in front, the Fourth and our brigade being in the rear of the

first line in supporting distance. We then moved forward to the top of the hill from which we had a view of the field beyond, our forces in front pressing forward under a heavy fire from the rebels. The brigades in our front inclining to the right as they advanced, and the brigade of the Sixth Corps, which was on our left, keeping too much to the left made a gap in our front line which our brigade was ordered to fill. It was about 11.30 o'clock A.M. when this order was received. We went down the hill and across the field, passing a ravine, and then mounted a slight eminence directly in front of a rebel battery posted on a hill opposite our position, which was shelling us as fast as the pieces could be loaded and fired. In our front the rebels were coming on in columns, and receiving the order "commence firing" we became engaged immediately. The regimental line was perfect, the men marching with precision and keeping well dressed on the colors, though the rebel fire of artillery and musketry was terrific. We were halted and kept up a steady fire for some time. Then came the order "cease firing" and shortly after this an aide dashed at full gallop across the field just in our rear who shouted "Retreat!" "Retreat!!" Looking to our right we saw our forces falling back before heavy masses

of the rebels who were following them closely, and the order was at once obeyed. When we reached the ravine, a short distance in rear of the eminence from which we had been driven, an order was given to rally, which I at once repeated and tried to stop my men, but before I could realize it we were surrounded by rebels one of whom, aiming his musket at me, demanded my sword which I had in my hand. I tendered it to him, when he yelled "belt and all" "belt and all" emphasized with sundry strong expressions, so I unbuckled my belt and gave it to him with the best grace I could under the circumstances. Nineteen men of my regiment were also captured, and as I found later, ~~[illegible]~~, Lieu - tenant Colonel Homer B. Sprague and Lieutenant Gardner of the Thirteenth Connecticut, the regiment on our right, with both of whom I was acquainted.

Under a strong guard we were hurried up the hill directly in the face of the rebel battery which was still firing as fast as the men could load and discharge the pieces, while our own shells were falling around us and our own bullets whizzing by our ears, but we soon passed from this and were rapidly marched to the rear where we were put with a number of other prisoners. Here we were kept for some time surrounded by the guard. Occasionally

groups of angry and excited men would gather near, from whose conversation we made up our minds that matters were going badly for the rebels. Disarmed cavalrymen who we understood belonged to General Imboden's command, which had been totally routed and dispersed by our cavalry, were taunted by their own men with cowardice and running from the Yankees, and we joining in the taunts, some of them made a rush at us with clubbed muskets and as I could not refrain from expressing my opinion of rebels generally, I certainly would have been hurt had not our guard interfered and threatened to shoot them if they did not "haul off". Lieutenant Colonel Browne, forgetting for the moment that he also was a prisoner, rushed forward to prevent the attack but the guards settled the matter effectually.

We were then marched to the town (Winchester) and placed in the Masonic Lodge room with guards posted inside and out. Certainly no lodge was ever better tiled. Late in the afternoon from the window in front we saw evidence of a retreat. Cavalry, artillery and baggage wagons, with members of infantrymen, were making a wild and frenzied rush for the rear, the whole body in seeming inextricable confusion, and shouting, yelling, and lashing their horses,

officers on horseback were urging to stop the panic, and all making confusion worse confounded. We saw what appeared to be one of our own cavalrymen not three hundred yards distant, and a wild hope of rescue filled our hearts, but apparently he could not break through the crowd and was soon quickly going the other way. The guards hurried us out of the building, myself and a couple of others trying to conceal ourselves behind a door but being discovered we were ordered out in savage tones, and then they marched us on a run out of the town, keeping us in a solid body and forcing their way through the mass of vehicles. After going some distance they took it more quietly but still pushed us forward rapidly through the gathering darkness and we could easily see that everything they had was in full retreat. Passing through Kernstown, Newtown, Middletown and Strasburg we finally halted near Fisher's Hill and glad we were of the rest as we had marched over thirty miles since leaving our camp in the morning. September 20th at early dawn we were marched six miles to Tom's Brook where we halted. We were kept under close guard but were permitted to get our meals in a house close by, and as the good woman who kept it showed her feelings to be with us and for the Union we managed to write letters home and to

our regiments which she concealed and afterwards duly forwarded.

September 22nd just as dark we were started off in a great hurry and after an all night march of twenty-eight miles reached New Market Friday, September 23rd, where we had a short rest and were then hurried on to Harrisonburg, twenty-one miles, which we reached September 24th, and again making but a short stop were pushed on to Staunton, twenty-two miles, which we arrived Sunday afternoon.

Part of the march would have been delightful if it had been made under less adverse circumstances. At Tom's Brook we feasted on persimmons which, as the weather had been frosty, were ripe and luscious and were the largest and finest I ever saw. We also gathered quantities of chinquapins, a diminutive chestnut but much sweeter. At one point we reached just at sundown we could see the Valley for miles and a more charming view one never saw. But we had no time for views as our captors were evidently in great fear lest we should be recaptured, and the officer in command - Lieutenant Williams - was a veritable brute, at one point where we had to cross a stream ordering the guards to shoot any of us who attempted to get a drink of water, so footsore, hungry and thirsty, with no chance for food or

rest after leaving Tom's Creek, we were pushed on until in
reached Staunton. Many had been wounded, some quite se-
verely, and they were really unable to keep up. We came
to a hill where that had the stragglers were left by guards
left behind for the purpose. Lieutenant Tom Hunt of a
Mississippi regiment, the fourteenth I think, was badly
wounded in the arm. My foot was so lame as possible but
the fright compelled me to keep, and during this re-
port of the bushwhacks were heard, and whether it was a sig-
nal or the death I do not know.- We never saw or heard of
the guards.- At Staunton we were surrounded by citizens
who jeered at and insulted us. There we boarded cars
"Stock Yard Truck" and from Staunton to Wheeling it required
pounding between stones to notice and consider it outside,
but such as it was it was the best to be had and we were
full to be crushed, with hunger already gnawing as we
had virtually had nothing to eat for three days. Our
guards were changed here and one of our officers calling
Lieutenant Billings and was commanded the rebel guard ordered
most solemnly to kill him on sight if he ever met his spirit
Billings tried to explain to the officer that. So cruel
that the women and children of the prisoners drowned his
voice and he walked away calmly feeling severely the

solemn denunciation of his crime.

Yesterday we left Stanton before sunrise, passing through Brookfield Gap. From the summit of which we had a beautiful view of the country on both sides of the mountains, and just after sunrise reached Richards Station, thirty-two miles from our starting place, where we took at once placed on common platform cars and started for Richmond, which we reached September 4th. On our arrival we were marched to Libby Prison where we were carefully searched and every article of value, as well as all money, taken from us. Many were the plans of concealment used to evade this, some putting the money in the mouth, or inside the shoes, and one officer filled his flask with greenbacks, put a little brandy on top, and pretended to drink while the search was going on. A list was made, showing name, regiment, company, and home address, and we were then marched up two flights of stairs and huddled into a large oblong room, the ceiling very low and supported at intervals by posts in the center, and the windows heavily grated. This room, as well as one on the floor above, was full of officers standing, sitting and lying down, and on our entrance we were at once seized upon and asked all manner of questions as to when, where and how, we were captured, how

[illegible]. Poor fellows! [illegible] in this miserable hole [illegible] arrivals of unfortunates like themselves. [illegible]. It [illegible] ! [illegible] effect. [illegible] consisting of a small piece of [illegible] in water, [illegible] ration was to be cut. [illegible] by four inches long, containing possibly a pint of corn meal, [illegible] looked for and [illegible]. [illegible] meat, about [illegible] to a man, [illegible].

In this dark [illegible] until Sun-day, October [illegible], under a strong guard [illegible] placed in [illegible]. [illegible] were posted on top of the cars [illegible]. Shortly after starting

we passed Pelle Isle, an island in the James river not much above the level of the water, and which would partly overflow during high freshes, where were confined thousands of our men wholly without shelter except such as they could construct themselves, and exposed to all weathers fine or inclement alike. As it was quite dark some of the officers contrived to get the bolts off the small square windows at the side ends of the cars and several managed to crawl out and drop off as the cars were going up steep grades where they ran very slowly. Another officer and myself drew lots as to which of us should go first and he secured the chance. Farrell had his foot through and was hanging by his hands to the window ledge about to drop when a shot was fired and with the cry "I am shot" he let go and fell. Immediately volleys were fired by all the guards on top as the train passed along without stopping, and I saw only supposed the poor fellow was killed. The guards inside at once extinguished the windows and thereafter took stations at each end as well as at the doors. We reached Danville at noon October 3rd, and were at once taken out of the cars and were kept closely together. Numbers of negroes came around and they, as well as the whites, drove a brisk business in catables with those so fortunate as to have money

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Salis-
[illegible]

[illegible]

ll, [illegible]

the "dead line" [illegible]

[illegible] and be shot [illegible], [illegible]

[illegible]. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible], [illegible]

[illegible] each

[illegible]. [illegible], [illegible]

[illegible]. [illegible]

[illegible], [illegible], [illegible]

[illegible] crew.

[illegible]

[illegible] of

our [illegible], Second Lieutenant J[illegible] Davis, of the One hundred and fifty-fifth New York, who had been engaged in [illegible], [illegible] cof-fee, [illegible] dead line had been fired upon and instantly killed. [illegible]

[illegible] circumstances [illegible]

[illegible] ground; [illegible] "I would not live alway" [illegible] comrade was carried out by the rebels and buried in the com-

[illegible] the prison. The utmost indignation was aroused by this cruel and cold-blooded murder, and protest was made to the prison commandant that a careful investigation should be made and the guard adequately punished, but we were informed afterward that he had been promoted sergeant and granted a furlough as a reward for his diligence.

Our prison life was dull and monotonous. We amused ourselves as best we could, but mainly by sleeping or walking around. At first we had the run of the entire enclosure but as the number of enlisted men, prisoners, increased, we were restricted to the left and the men to the right, guards were placed at short intervals on a line between the space allotted to the officers and that given to the enlisted men and no communication was allowed between them. The one topic of conversation was exchange and that we were always ready to discuss. Plans of escape were numerous, tunnelling being the favorite one as it was deemed most feasible, but I did not learn of anyone using them while we were in Salisbury as our stay was too short. One plan was undertaken which might have been a success but for a most untoward circumstance. The officers numbered about three hundred and the men upwards of [illegible] thousand. Every-

[illegible]ated only by the line of sentry between them. It was determined to [illegible] the two into their respective [illegible]-[illegible]ments, primary, secondary, and to assign officers to each, as far as possible [illegible] the [illegible] of their own officers, or if [illegible] [illegible] as to as officers who should be [illegible] to the men as their commanders. When the communication should be completed, at a fixed time and [illegible] signal, the men and officers were to fall in position, a [illegible] to be [illegible] the guns and guard house, the guard to be [illegible] and the guns and ammunition seized, and with these the prisoners would make for the nearest point of safety. It was well planned and could have worked with partial success at least if our guards were not treacherous and [illegible] but as a character to be afraid of if we acted together. At first there were frequent opportunities of communication as the guards were not very strict, and when two of them could meet together and talk [illegible] to each other as they changed their direction to retrace their beat, one or two officers would quietly slip out of line and the moment would be great. This however was discovered and the guards were obliged to all march in the same direction either way, so [illegible] should

be no two with their backs to each other, and it thus became too dangerous to try to get across the line. This however did not stop us and some of the officers would lie down near one of the groups of men which would assemble as close to the line as possible, and a stone, or weight, with a note attached would be thrown among the group by one of whom it would at once be picked up and soon reach its destination. This was carried on for some time and the plan was nearly reaching completion when one day, October last, one of the officers, all rolled his note in a pelloy bone, threw it just as the guard turned and the note unfortunately fell directly at his feet. Seeing the note on the point of his bayonet he at once called for the corporal of the guard to whom he gave the missive and by him it was carried out to the officer of the guard. Very quickly we saw that something was amiss as the guards were all doubled and the officers and men compelled to fall back further back from the line of sentries so there could be no possible chance of communication. Then a strict search was made by the prison authorities to discover the author of the letter which he was enabled to evade through the efforts of the other prisoners. It was reported among us that the letter had contained a full and complete out-

aripiaio of which [illegible] that it had formerly been [illegible] as it was, but these names are now confounded of late.

The [illegible] there was a large arrival of [illegible]-mers under a [illegible] and [illegible], October 14th, the [illegible] were all [illegible] out of the [illegible] pen, but in two days [illegible] Danville, which we reached October 20th. Some few of the [illegible]mers escaped from the [illegible] windows, but were probably all recaptured. We were [illegible] to a large [illegible] building, two stories high, which had formerly been "Holland's Tobacco Factory". The [illegible] was local with the road and as it was on a slight hill the building showed to [illegible] advantage. It had story [illegible] above the road to front, and at this end, enclosed by a high fence, was the yard where the [illegible] were admitted to work. On the right hand side of the building was the [illegible] and machinery, small [illegible] and [illegible] were carefully [illegible]. Similar to the [illegible], on the left side, was an extension built of brick, the [illegible] glass, the [illegible] of the roof being just below the window sill of the first story. This extension had windows in each end and two in the side, the [illegible] being a [illegible] the first floor of the [illegible] factory, which was [illegible]. The

first or second floor of the prison we were now allowed to occupy permanently, and a guard was posted there to prevent more than a certain number coming down at once as it was sometimes permitted that two or three might walk up and down for a time for exercise. The glass of the windows on this floor had all been broken out and the spaces covered with heavy wire guards. The entrance to the yard was by a stairway at the rear of this floor. In the yard a guard was posted, since guards also rested all around the building on the outside, the guard being about ten yards from the extension. The first story was reached by a wooden stairway, just at the entrance, going up the side of the building, and the second story by another stairway directly over the first. Both had a slight railing at the side and top. In each of the two stories there were windows on both sides so we had plenty of light and, in each of the cells was broken, a fresh supply of air also. Water was to certain whatever and the floors of the floor being raised far apart we on the first story had plenty of air from below as well as from the windows on the sides, the top story being somewhat more comfortable in this respect the cold air from our floor tending to keep the occupants much warmer. One huge drum stove at the front

healed [illegible] of it I was [illegible]. [illegible] were about [illegible] prisoners confined in this house, at the [illegible] tention, and we occupied [illegible] portion of [illegible] rooms where we could not but sleep and very [illegible] as it had been left by the rebels. - The mess with which I was connected was located on the first floor, on the left side looking from the front, opposite the second window. The other members of the mess were Lieutenant Colonel Wakefield of Tenn., Captain [illegible], of Oldtown, Me., Captain Rouzer, of Frederick, Md., Lieutenant Kelly, of Wis., Lieutenant Jones, of Iowa, Lieutenant Clarke, of Tenn., Lieutenant Rose, several others whose names I do not recall, and my particular chum, Lieutenant W. [illegible] Goff, of the Fifth N.Y. Cavalry, [illegible] splendid fellow he was. The officer and fellow-prisoner whose kindness I should never forget - Captain George [illegible] Putnam - One hundred and seventy-sixth N.Y., whom I had met before being captured and who had been acquainted with my brother in Germany. He was in another mess located on the upper floor. Calling me aside one day he tendered me a confederate bill of fifty dollars, simply asking that on my release I should repay him the Ten dollars in greenbacks which it had cost him. This may seem like a small matter but only those who have been

in like condition [illegible] until [illegible], where it was hard to [illegible] impossibility [illegible] everything [illegible] even in [illegible]. [illegible] a cooperative [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] kind on him, his [illegible] was most noble and not to be forgotten. [illegible] was divided and [illegible] it was to [illegible] the food and [illegible] it to each man.

Colonel [illegible], a [illegible] officer, [illegible] chosen chief [illegible], [illegible] consistent [illegible] his division of the rations. The [illegible] on the ground floor where the food was delivered; it was divided up as equally and fairly as possible in portions corresponding to the number of [illegible], by Colonel [illegible], one [illegible] turned his back and, [illegible] his finger on a portion, would say "[illegible] so and so", and that portion would go to the [illegible], and so on until all was distributed. This would apply to [illegible] it, which was not more than three times a week for one of the other, the principal ration consisting of one small [illegible] of [illegible] bread similar to that known in [illegible]. The [illegible], one half pint to a man, was [illegible] of black beans,

"Bringer-Debt" or called them, [illegible], and was a most disgusting looking [illegible] with [illegible] to be [illegible], but it was "easy," [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] chief, "lin-ta" (or [illegible]) and [illegible] [illegible] of the [illegible], or room [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and served without [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the half digested food [illegible] [illegible]. This gave rise to our expressed belief [illegible] [illegible] into the [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] afterwards removed [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] each one had a small [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], and at regular intervals the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. There were [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] broken up and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] the recipient was so fortunate as to [illegible] [illegible] to purchase rice, they were [illegible] [illegible]. Meat, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] combined with the rice [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and savory [illegible]!! Occasionally [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] bread was served instead of [illegible] bread [illegible]. At first we heartily relished, but finding it [illegible] [illegible], both [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. We could [illegible] but [illegible] [illegible], and [illegible] [illegible]

price for [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] flour biscuits, sweet potatoes and [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] time [illegible] is to be [illegible] at [illegible] [illegible] of service, and those of us possessing [illegible] would fill their coffees to overflowing. One [illegible], [illegible] fellow who had been out many [illegible] years [illegible] to me, and on enquiring where he was we were told he had realized over two thousand dollars in [illegible] [illegible] Yankees!! [illegible] [illegible] relishes the taste [illegible] sweet [illegible] [illegible] or the [illegible] [illegible] worse [illegible] [illegible] one though it little suffices to stay our insatiable hunger. Often a few biscuits were kept [illegible] several days and were put in the owner's [illegible] [illegible] the wall, from which they could sometimes be taken by those less fortunate, but this was not common even though the pangs of hunger were almost unbearable.

One evil [illegible] was to [illegible] on the "[illegible] detail", a party of six [illegible] allowed to go for water to the river [illegible], a short distance [illegible], marching in couples each carrying a pail, under a guard of [illegible] on one

at either end of the column, and it was perfect delight to get out and breathe the clear crisp air and long with all our hearts for freedom.

On one side of the road, a short distance from the prison, was a large old-fashioned brick oven. This was an object of great solicitude to us as, if by any possibility the guards could both be got ahead by our loitering behind, one of the boys passing his pail to a comrade would bolt into the oven and then lie there till darkness came on, after which he would crawl out and endeavor to make his escape to our lines. It seemed a rash undertaking, but considering that the oven was never used and not many people went to the river by the road we followed, it was not so rash as it looked. Several succeeded, several failed, but it could not be tried very often as we could not often evade the vigilance of the guards.

Talk of escape was about the only subject of conversation alternated with that of exchange. Captain Harding of our mess with two other officers, had been confined in the <u>black hole</u> or <u>dark cell</u> in Libby, as hostages for some rebel spies who had been captured by our troops and were threatened with execution. At last our officers were released from close confinement and Captain Harding

[illegible]. We proposed to [illegible],

Lieutenant [illegible] contemplate [illegible]

not either by [illegible] or [illegible], [illegible]

[illegible] cellar door [illegible]

principal [illegible], to see if we could effect [illegible]

there to the [illegible], but we found this

was an object of regular inspection, a Rebel officer going

in and through the cellar and examining it carefully at

regular intervals which were very short. It [illegible] one

of us that the extension of the [illegible] prove a feasi-

ble point and [illegible] it was close to [illegible] which

faced it [illegible] yards distant we

determined to try [illegible]. The [illegible] of the

extension [illegible] under the sill of a window, so

[illegible] with the [illegible] who occupied that

portion of the floor we worked at night and in the darkness,

as we wished to conceal what we were doing from even our

own fellow prisoners, except those [illegible] in the plot,

and at last succeeded in displacing bricks enough to allow

the passage of a body. Crawling through this hole we

found a [illegible] ceiling of lath and plaster which was [illegible]

[illegible] sufficiently for our object

and we then proceeded to the construction of a ladder which

was made of pieces of rope and such material as we could gather together, strips of blankets, strips of overcoats or contraband strings, the cross pieces or rungs being made of light pieces of wood picked up around the prison. We were many nights and days getting it far as this for we could not work steadily nor at first all together, but at last our ladder was completed, one night it was lowered, and Captain [illegible], Rouzer, Coff and myself descended. We found the floor covered by plank securely nailed down and this we had to remove with a rebel guard pacing up and down directly under the windows in front of the guard house and with the light of the guard's fire reflecting through the windows lighting up the whole interior, but by patience we at last succeeded in getting up a plank and were congratulating ourselves on our success when suddenly we heard the shout "turn out the guard !" - "turn out the guard!" and supposing all was discovered, we made a dash up the ladder in almost less time than it takes to tell it and rapidly piling things to cover the hole in the well under the window awaited in trembling silence whatever might occur. Fortunately it proved a false alarm so far as we were concerned but we made up our minds we would wait for the next night before going further. That we was not been

[illegible] in our [illegible] floor, [illegible] and [illegible] an [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], lowering [illegible] through the opening in the floor, found ourselves in a small cellar on a level with the ground and [illegible] small [illegible] [illegible] at it. [illegible] a small place of [illegible] could be used by, we proceeded to scrape out the earth [illegible] [illegible], our intention at first being to [illegible] tunnel for a distance [illegible], but we gave up that idea [illegible] [illegible] simply [illegible] the foundation and [illegible] in the [illegible] outside, [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible], intending to complete the job [illegible] night. We worked [illegible] for several nights and made considerable of a hole but the earth was hard and not [illegible] some distance beneath the surface, while our tools were only a sharp pointed stick and the half of a tin canteen. One night we felt the need to work, [illegible] which we had nearly completed our task and so determined to take a rest. Fortunately for us we did so for quite late we were surprised by the advent of Lieutenant Colonel Smith, the commandant of the prison, attended by a number of rebel officers, who walked directly to the

[illegible]ches under which we had been working, called away [illegible] blanket used to cover the hole (though the bricks were all in as we had left them regularly) and with the expression "damn those Yankees!" turned and walked out followed by the other officers. The door from the lower floor leading to the extension was then opened [illegible] a guard placed there. When too the cellar was examined and we were left for the night. Washes were all well hoped and dressing, and in our clothes. For the attempt was discovered we have never known though it was admitted that some officer not in the project had given the matter away because [illegible] benefit of be doing, and it became to be confirmed by the directions with which the hole was found, that such a thought seemed too incredible to hold for a moment. At any rate, we were discovered and could not again be taken in that way. The [illegible] attempt was discovered by rare all formed in line on each floor, by the guards, and one of the rebel officers attempted to count us but after several ineffectual trials and several sharp admonitions that "you uns had better keep your places" it was given up in disgust and the roll was called. There too there was trouble as several answers to the same name and at last, the rebels being tired and very angry, we were

compelled to answer to our names at [illegible] roll call and to step in a new line under guard. [illegible] hall was in [illegible] and [illegible] were [illegible] (Macleod? [illegible]) but I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] as we [illegible] they did it.

[illegible] with [illegible] to [illegible] and [illegible]. Our thoughts were all with our dear [illegible] at home and our misery was based in [illegible] thinking of [illegible] assembling together and [illegible] minds [illegible] as sadly disturbed by the thought of us and of our suffering, and then the pangs of hunger were made the more severe as our minds turned to the feasts so [illegible] were enjoying with little thought on their part of the hunger we were enduring or, if thought of, little realizing how great was our need.

Early in December a plan was organized to rush upon and overpower the guards stationed within the prison, seize their arms and then make a fight for liberty.

December 11th the rush was made but was wholly unsuccessful, Colonel William C. Rhoades, of the Twenty-fourth New York Cavalry, being shot and killed as he was bravely leading the attack and the others were driven back to their quarters. About the same time Major Ruggles,

[illegible] D. [illegible]., [illegible] [illegible] after died.

[illegible], [illegible] found [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] I [illegible] I could [illegible] back [illegible] I [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] objections and in "[illegible]" [illegible] determined [illegible] [illegible]. - [illegible] !!! [illegible] [illegible]-[illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] "[illegible]-[illegible]" [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]-[illegible], [illegible]. [illegible] I [illegible]-

serve to break in the shape of the house, cracking the [illegible] half inch in size and our rice and fell of course that wise, and I fairly floated over that as I thought what a substitute was the world produce then [illegible] with the rice!!! At last all was in readiness. We poured the rice in and filled the vessel nearly two-thirds full of water, then waiting to wash the rice thoroughly but about blowing off the dust and husks which floated to the surface, we [illegible] the broken house which nearly caused an overflow as we had not allowed quite enough space for them, and then carefully skimming it over the fire by-looked to [illegible] heights, so as not to burn the rice [illegible] and which that the rice did not burn. We must have presented a peculiar sight to others - I in an old blouse, with tattered trousers, one worn out shoe, an old fatigue cap [illegible] on my head in [illegible]; Geff with his trousers tucked inside the legs of an old pair of worn out cavalry boots, an old blouse, and what had been a felt hat but which, entirely deprived of the rim and [illegible] of the crown, looked in shape and color like an old wooden bowl, both of us heartily blowing in the face of keep it so-low and intently watching between times for the "boil" to come! We had [illegible] the secret of cooking rice so un-

fection, which [illegible] all white [illegible]-ing, and when we saw the first [illegible] gradually swell and burst [illegible] quite [illegible] we knew our dinner was ready to be served. The rich fat had been extracted from the bones of our [illegible] and was plainly perceptible. [illegible] with [illegible] on a [illegible] over the [illegible]!

We had not forgotten our [illegible] of [illegible] it [illegible] of the prison, [illegible] kind friend had provided [illegible] this [illegible]. [illegible] it in two portions. It was nothing [illegible] trifles [illegible], [illegible] a few moments [illegible] us [illegible] taken [illegible], and even, before we could fairly realize the fact [illegible] sides [illegible] were be-ing [illegible] for more!! [illegible], with full [illegible] allow-ing [illegible], we filled our [illegible] (which [illegible] not [illegible] of) and [illegible] at [illegible]. - It [illegible]

we should be hungry again - we had had one "square meal" at least and that was all the thought we had.

[illegible] - [illegible] ! - [illegible] . [illegible], [illegible] T.

[illegible] . I [illegible] cold, [illegible], [illegible] fed and scantily clad [illegible] winter be- fore[illegible] . [illegible] blanket on the floor, [illegible], [illegible] broken [illegible], [illegible] chilled [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible] s closing [illegible], [illegible] over us, we would [illegible] sleep.. This [illegible], the cold and [illegible] for only a fitful [illegible], [illegible] forlorn [illegible] of [illegible], [illegible] rable [illegible]. An when [illegible] as if [illegible] should be

before another ration came, but at times the pleasure of eating was too much and too strong and we would devour every mouthful in a few bites only to be sorry for it afterwards. The rations grew poorer and smaller every day. At times we had meat or soup only once a week. Many of our guards were old men, too good for service in the field, and they too complained bitterly of the rations issued to them, usually a pint of raw corn meal a day which they might cook as they chose, but they had freedom and a chance to purchase other edibles, as well as having provisions sent them from their homes, though on several occasions from our windows we saw coming in two mountain carts, in which were meats and other good things, which would be seized on their arrival in town and transferred to the commissary to be sent to the front as we learned from our guards. The rebellion was on its last legs and the army had not enough to eat so that everything obtainable in the way of food, meat and flour especially, was sent to the armies who were doing the fighting and the home people were allowed but scant rations.

One day there was spilled from our window some flour which fell on the dirty pavide and in a few days, the ball going through the window and the flour came at. Lit-

ing in the midst Captain [illegible], of New York, who was peeling potatoes. This was the only incident of the kind, except [illegible], and [illegible] would not [illegible] [illegible]ally. [illegible] [illegible] duties would permit.

We were permitted to [illegible] lines and under certain restrictions - only one side of the paper could be written on and not [illegible] lines as to our condition was permitted, the letter must be left unsealed, and was then handed to the commandant of the prison. We could simply say we were all alive and that all was well. I [illegible] the opportunity [illegible] to Colonel John [illegible], of the Confederate Army, residing in Richmond, who had been [illegible] of my father's, advising that I was a prisoner and asking him to do what he could for me, but as I learned later, my letter did not reach him until after my exchange, [illegible] back.

All sorts of [illegible] were employed to amuse ourselves and while away time. [illegible] until the [illegible] were

[illegible] cut off and [illegible] in distinctness.

[illegible] chicken [illegible] in the [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]" - Richmond, [illegible] [illegible].

One common pastime we had - a [illegible] delight to all - singing! The days were short, the [illegible] long, and in our dark [illegible] [illegible] light [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] by the poor tallow candles [illegible] [illegible] at 100 men, we usually "retired" immediately after the count [illegible] [illegible] and while we could not see our [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] our neighbors [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. We lay close together [illegible] [illegible], our heads toward [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] just [illegible] enough [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] between [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] quite [illegible] would [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the first line [illegible] [illegible] and the [illegible] recognize it [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and then it would join in and sing it to the end. Then another [illegible] would be sung and then would come war songs, sometimes a solo, sometimes a duet or quartette, and then all join in the chorus with a will. Lieutenant Reilly of Pennsylvania and Lieutenant Matthews of Wisconsin were fine singers, as was also Lieutenant McCutcheon, who sang comic songs which called forth many a hearty laugh. The guards would come up to the door of the prison and listen in silence until at last

the "Star Spangled Banner" or "John Brown's Body" would [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] Connecticut, devised [illegible] as [illegible] practical [illegible]! [illegible] no sooner broached than it was [illegible] seized upon [illegible] enthusiasm. [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible]! [illegible]. [illegible], [illegible]. "[illegible]" [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible] could [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] "[illegible]

Mediterranean Danville Times." before so many officials [illegible] public!

I, the little girl of Tuscan Cliff and I know really [illegible] have [illegible] exploded, and we fell so-[illegible] the priviliges which we were entitled. I was [illegible] all a severe and [illegible] scary, [illegible] so miserably [illegible] to relate my speech all the time. I think I should have [illegible] I but I not [illegible] officer to another - "Your Honor! I am afraid he is [illegible]!!!" and [illegible] forward [illegible] I [illegible] to [illegible] I [illegible] to try to live at [illegible] Tuscan [illegible] home. Should [illegible] this one of the [illegible] came to the [illegible] and called for Firemen's Call, [illegible] more [illegible]. The [illegible] box had been re-[illegible] for [illegible] and [illegible] in it [illegible] have it. Going [illegible] the [illegible] still the [illegible] returned [illegible] a box [illegible], though [illegible] it took all his [illegible] strength to carry [illegible] "[illegible] have! it's [illegible] officer [illegible] without [illegible] have a [illegible]!!" [illegible] - [illegible]

[illegible]! [illegible] - [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] all - [illegible] [illegible] - [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] until I [illegible] first [illegible] of it, [illegible] "[illegible] things," "[illegible]" and "Oh! aint [illegible] clever just!!," [illegible] "I" or "mine" but always "[illegible]" or "[illegible]", - and I [illegible] give [illegible] if I did not watch closely the [illegible]vision, and I [illegible] advice [illegible] of [illegible]! [illegible], while [illegible] with ourselves, [illegible] seemed t[illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] boxes c[illegible] received i[illegible] [illegible] c[illegible]-[illegible] rejoicing or greater thankfulness t[illegible]. [illegible] while [illegible] articles I [illegible] [illegible] - [illegible] things [illegible] - [illegible] at last came to an end. [illegible] to stand our s[illegible] and [illegible] the good things w[illegible].

[illegible] b[illegible], more hopeful feeling [illegible]. [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible] con-

[illegible] "[illegible] positively [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] broke to [illegible] the fourth was strong to hold our child [illegible] and it fell. We felt we had been tricked and deceived and that it was [illegible] to keep us alive. [illegible] word was held so carefully and it [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] pieces of [illegible] . [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] times [illegible] . [illegible] "dinner" [illegible] and [illegible] stand [illegible] , [illegible] . [illegible] , [illegible] all [illegible] , [illegible] , [illegible] captivity I [illegible] remember [illegible] it was done [illegible] . Our progress was [illegible] and we did not reach Richmond until [illegible] 19th [illegible] prison but with very different feelings from those we had when first entering that place. [illegible] were signed [illegible] officers [illegible] some of their valuables but [illegible] , and if anybody was [illegible] I failed to [illegible] . [illegible] a number of boxes were delivered to the prisoners [illegible] I received two containing clothing and [illegible] , [illegible] which [illegible] . [illegible] - [illegible] boxes [illegible]

were liberally distributed, and there was constant cooking and feasting from that time until our release, both day and night.

February 22nd, during the forenoon, we were marched out and formed in line near the river. Many of us recalled it as being the Anniversary of Washington's birthday and it seemed fitting we should be liberated on that day of all others, the very thought of W A S H I N G T O N and F R E E D O M being synonymous!! Soon we were marched down to a steamboat lying alongside the wharf, a large white flag floating from the pole in the bow, we filed aboard and then an order was given, the lines were cast off and we started.

Before leaving the prison, as soon as orders came for us to leave it, a general destruction of the provisions remaining was begun. Every thing which had not been consumed was piled in huge heaps on the floors, flour, sugar, coffee, salt, hams and tongues (which were first carefully chopped or cut fine), canned meats and canned fruits, (which were all cut open), with pepper, pickles and vinegar, all were piled together and then so thoroughly mixed that it was impossible for the hungry rebels, who soon flocked in, to find even a morsel which was edible. It seemed like a

heartless waste, but we felt it would have been a worse one to have left so much to help feed the rebels, and then too were the bitter feelings we had in remembering our treatment and the starvation we had experienced at their hands.

We steamed down the James river until we reached Varina, which was as far as the rebel boat could go, and were then landed. Looking up we saw our dear old flag flying from the works a short distance beyond and with tears streaming from our eyes at the sight, and hearts full to overflowing with gratitude and thanksgiving for our deliverance, we streamed across the point to where our own boat, the "Leary", was lying. We passed our lines, guarded by darkey soldiers whom we could have hugged in our excess of joy, and soon were safe on board with our own beautiful flag over our heads and the feeling deep in our hearts, that we were again in "God's country". That it was to us always in our thoughts and remarks as compared to rebeldom. - Sweet name and now oh! how sweet! as we realized that we were indeed there at last.

On the boat kind hearts received us and kind hands ministered to our wants. Something to eat and cups of steaming fragrant coffee were quickly passed to those able

to receive them, while the surgeons strove to aid and minister to those - alas! how many - too weak to eat or drink and whose failing strength was almost gone. The officers had suffered severely but the poor men had been much worse treated as their rations had been scanty and their covering mainly the canopy of heaven, no shelter except such as they could construct from blankets or by digging holes in the ground being theirs, and many alas! reached God's country indeed, freed from all trial, exposure and hunger. We were too much overcome to walk or talk much but over and over again was the remark made "God's country at last" - "God's country at last!!"

The steamer made good speed and next morning February 23rd, we were landed at Annapolis, Md., and marched directly to the grounds of the Naval Academy. Here a breakfast was served under the auspices of the Sanitary Commission and the same beneficent association distributed clothing and blankets to those needing them. We were quartered in the officer's hospital where we were provided with good beds, and though there were nine of us in a room usually occupied by six we were in a paradise compared with the close quarters we had been occupying. We were well fed and had plenty of medical advice, a number of

surgeons and physicians being constantly in attendance. Anything and everything seemed good to us after the five months of privation and misery. I applied for leave of absence February 26th, and while waiting for it amused myself in company with other comrades in strolling around the city, and listening to the speeches and debates in the Capitol, the House of Delegates, as it is called in Maryland, being then in session. March 4th, my furlough arrived and bidding farewell to my comrades I at once took train for New York, arriving early next morning. I can not picture my reception nor the rejoicing made over me, nor can I describe our own feelings when again with those I loved so dearly and whom I had feared I might never meet again on earth. I was home again - and with that thought I was content.

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